United Nations S/PV.7206

# Security Council

Sixty-ninth year

*Provisional*

## 7206th meeting

Tuesday, 24 June 2014, 3 p.m.
New York

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| *President:* | Mr. Iliichev | (Russian Federation) |
| *Members:* | Argentina | Mrs. Perceval |
| | Australia | Ms. King |
| | Chad | Mr. Cherif |
| | Chile | Mr. Barros Melet |
| | China | Ms. Jiang Hua |
| | France | Mr. Araud |
| | Jordan | Mr. Hmoud |
| | Lithuania | Ms. Murmokaite |
| | Luxembourg | Ms. Lucas |
| | Nigeria | Mr. Laro |
| | Republic of Korea | Mr. Lee Kyung Chul |
| | Rwanda | Mr. Gasana |
| | United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland | Mr. Wilson |
| | United States of America | Mr. Dunn |

## Agenda

The situation in the Central African Republic

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the translation of speeches delivered in other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-0506. Corrected records will be reissued electronically on the Official Document System of the United Nations (http://documents.un.org).

14-43912 (E)

Accessible document Please recycle

*The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.*

**Adoption of the agenda**

*The agenda was adopted.*

**The situation in the Central African Republic**

**The President** (*spoke in Russian*): In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of the Central African Republic to participate in this meeting.

On behalf of the Council, I welcome Her Excellency Ms. Marguerite Marie Maliavo-Samba, Minister for Public Health, Social Affairs, Gender and Humanitarian Action of the Central African Republic.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Mr. Babacar Gaye, Acting Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic, to participate in this meeting.

On behalf of the Council, I welcome Mr. Gaye, who is joining today's meeting via video-teleconference from Bangui.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Ms. Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, Executive Director of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I now give the floor to Mr. Gaye.

**Mr. Gaye** (*spoke in French*): I express my deep respect to the Council and I thank you, Sir, for this opportunity to update its members, from my vantage point in Bangui, on the situation in the Central African Republic. The security situation remains tense in the capital and within the country. The recent attack on the Church of Our Lady of Fatima in Bangui on 28 May, in which 11 people, including the priest, were killed, illustrates not only the dangerous spiral of attacks and reprisals affecting the country, but also a radicalization of both parties and the risk that the situation may grow more deadly yet.

The attack followed an incident in Bangui in the same week, in which three young Muslims were brutally killed, probably by anti-Balaka elements, while traveling to a football match organized to promote intercommunal reconciliation. These events provoked spontaneous popular demonstrations against what some consider to be a failure on the part of the transitional authorities and international forces to restore security. A number of barricades were erected in the city and had to be removed by international forces. Bangui was paralysed for three days and several people were killed.

The spiral of violence and retaliation has also affected the interior of the country, in the west and the centre in particular. In the north-west, along the border with Chad, an increasing number of attacks on villages by heavily armed ex-Séléka and Peuhl groups — the Mbororos — were reported. This probably indicates an attempt on the part of the ex-Séléka to extend their area of control to the west, even as the anti-Balakas are strengthening their presence in these same areas. Consequently, there have been a number of violent clashes between anti-Balakas and ex-Séléka.

(*spoke in English*)

Many villages have been set ablaze, causing the displacement of local populations. Ex-Séléka have also enhanced their presence in Bambari, where they established their military command centre. Forces from the African-led International Support Mission for the Central African Republic (MISCA) and Operation Sangaris have been deployed to Bambari.

Civilian communities remain direct targets of sectarian violence and reprisal killings. Yesterday, for example, in Bambari, 18 people were reportedly killed, including 3 children and 1 woman, and 8 were wounded in an attack by anti-Balaka against the Peuhl. Twenty-two houses were set ablaze. In retaliation, the ex-Séléka killed eight persons and wounded four later in the day. Another 129 civilians sought refuge at the MISCA base, of which 58 were moved from the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) compound.

The few Muslim communities that are left in Bangui remain largely confined to their neighbourhoods, mainly in the PK5 district. They are encircled by anti-Balaka who are not only preventing people from leaving but are also cutting off food and medical supplies. There are also reports of anti-Balaka targeting non-Muslim individuals who are believed to be helping Muslim populations through the provision of supplies or services. Elements of the Central African Armed Forces

are involved in many of those incidents alongside the anti-Balaka. Throughout the country, approximately 20,000 people from minority communities are trapped in 16 locations; if they leave, they may be attacked before they reach safety.

MISCA and Operation Sangaris are doing their best to stabilize the situation and protect civilians in their areas of deployment, while humanitarian actors are addressing the critical needs of the displaced people. However, their conditions remain precarious. The European Union military operation in the Central African Republic has now reached its full operational capability and is providing security at the Bangui airport as well as in the third and fifth arrondissements of Bangui. We are working closely with those forces to coordinate efforts to enhance the protection of populations under threat and to prevent further violence. However, the protection needs in the country are enormous, and there is an urgent need to strengthen MISCA's capabilities to provide an effective response. Furthermore, international forces can be effective only if their efforts are coupled with effective measures to extend State authority, mediate between communities and armed groups and fight impunity — most important, by restoring the penal chain. MINUSCA is focusing on supporting initiatives in those areas.

The MINUSCA guard unit is now deployed in Bangui, Bouar and Bambari. It has proven to be a critical asset in ensuring the security of United Nations installations and personnel and to extricate staff members under threat.

The human rights and humanitarian situation remains of serious concern. Violations of human rights and international humanitarian law continue to be committed by all armed groups and civilians, using weapons with impunity. More than half a million people remain displaced, including 370,000 who have crossed the borders, placing a significant strain on neighbouring countries. Half the population of the Central African Republic is in need of humanitarian assistance.

Let me now turn to the political situation, which has deteriorated noticeably over the past month. The continuing insecurity created by the various armed groups is improving too slowly to satisfy the population. That has led to growing criticism about the inability of the Transitional Government to deliver on security, which risks undermining its authority. The Government is struggling to govern the country without its own security forces or financial means. At the same time, the political elite are deeply divided, and there is a high level of political and social antagonism and distrust among political actors and among communities. That does not bode well for the holding of credible elections early next year.

The recent attempt by the ex-Séléka to unify its structures and the establishment of its headquarters in the central city of Bambari were perceived by both the Government and parts of the population as a provocative attempt at de facto partition. However, political cohesiveness within the ex-Séléka structure remains weak. The anti-Balaka movement remains highly fluid, despite ongoing efforts to create an organizational and command structure. It is still difficult to gauge what role the anti-Balaka could or should play in the political dialogue that the country must begin.

There is no doubt that disarmament and an inclusive political dialogue are essential steps to achieve lasting security. The recent seminar facilitated by the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue at the request of the Head of State of the Transition and the dialogue initiative of a local non-governmental organization are encouraging developments. They indicate that many Central Africans are ready for dialogue if they believe it will bring peace. Such dialogue should lead to a political agreement with regard to elections, disarmament and the composition of the national armed forces and other key political issues, including the future of governance, decentralization, the question of constructively addressing the root causes of the crisis, and the economic future. That will be vital to create the conditions conducive to the return of refugees and displaced persons.

Based on our consultations with key regional actors, including the mediator, President Sassou Nguesso of the Republic of the Congo, a representative of President Deby Itno of Chad, the Chair of the Economic Community of Central African States and national stakeholders, we believe that there is an immediate need to support an inclusive negotiation process on disarmament that results in a political agreement and the eventual disarmament of all armed groups. There is no doubt that the process will be complicated and will certainly require time to fully evolve. It is essential that the dialogue process be owned by Central Africans. However, there will be no lasting solution without the continued engagement of the subregion.

MINUSCA is working with the transitional authorities and the international security forces to prevent further violence in the capital and throughout

the country, including by investigating violations and in order to take concrete measures to ensure that perpetrators are held accountable. To that end, MINUSCA is increasing its civilian component and preparing for its deployment to a number of locations outside Bangui by the end of July, with a focus on supporting local authorities and enhancing efforts to protect civilians. Efforts continue to establish the peacekeeping operation and prepare for a seamless transfer of authority from MISCA to MINUSCA on 15 September. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations will brief the Council in mid-July on the state of play with regard to the deployment of the peacekeeping operation and the transition from MISCA to MINUSCA.

(*spoke in French*)

The attention that the international community has paid to the Central African Republic in recent months has contributed to preventing the country from falling further into the spiral of violence. MINUSCA, the United Nations country team and the international forces continue to make the necessary efforts to support the authorities and the people of the Central African Republic to address immediate challenges and prevent a further deterioration of the situation. However, the situation in the Central African Republic remains complex and multifaceted. Facing it will require time and resources. The continued commitment and resolve of the region and the wider international community and a unified and cohesive approach will be critical factors in achieving that goal.

**The President** (*spoke in Russian*): I thank Mr. Gaye for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Ms. Mlambo-Ngcuka.

**Ms. Mlambo-Ngcuka**: I thank you, Mr. President, for inviting me to brief the Council today on my recent visit to the Central African Republic. A month ago I visited Bangui on a joint mission with the Special Envoy of the African Union on Women, Peace and Security. Our joint presence strengthened the coordination and standing of the Mission, as well as the potential for joint follow-up action with the African Union (AU).

In the Central African Republic, we met with the President, the Prime Minister, key ministers and Government officials, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA), the African Union Chair, Special Representative and Head of the African-led International Support Mission in the Central African Republic (MISCA), the United Nations country team, the Technical Follow-Up Committee on the Crisis in the Central African Republic, the High-Level Women's Advisory Group, 17 civil society organizations, 16 women's organizations, religious leaders and many internally displaced persons (IDPs). We received enormous support from the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and the Head of MISCA and their teams, for which I am grateful.

Our goals were to give visibility to the plight of women and girls, ensure that gender issues were addressed from the outset in the newly established United Nations Mission and promote women's participation and leadership in local reconciliation, national dialogues, transitional justice and upcoming elections.

What we heard and what we saw was terrifying. In displacement camps all over the country, including the one we visited, people seek shelter under plastic covers or even pieces of cloth in inhumane conditions, surrounded by dirty puddles of stagnant water and garbage, vulnerable to water-borne diseases. The international community has received numerous reports of rape, sexual slavery and other violations perpetrated by armed actors. Those reports were confirmed in December by a United Nations fact-finding mission led by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCR) and supported by UN-Women. That violence has taken place in house-to-house searches, unauthorized roadblocks and military camps, and as part of sectarian violence. We learned that girls were frequently subjected to forced marriage. Many have become pregnant, miscarried or contracted sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV. There is a great need for medical and psychosocial support at IDP sites, 90 per cent of which lack services for survivors of gender-based violence. The very few services that are available assist hundreds of rape victims every month.

An untold number of pregnant women do not have access to basic reproductive and obstetric care. That is a matter of life and death in a country where a woman's risk of maternal death is already 140 times higher than in a developed country. What I heard over and over again from women was that they needed security and the rule of law, health care, food and schools for their children. Those were some of their greatest needs. Almost two thirds of schools remain closed,

and hundreds of thousands of children are growing up without an education.

Neighbouring countries are struggling to provide adequate support for tens of thousands of refugees. Cameroon now hosts approximately 100,000 newly arrived refugees, of whom 84 per cent are women and children who arrived after travelling for many days or weeks and are often sick and traumatized. They arrive to find one nurse and fewer than a few dozen hygiene and medical kits for assisting thousands. It is important to highlight those alarming and distressing facts because, as of today, the international community has funded less than one third of the humanitarian appeal.

Today I would like to call urgently for the full funding of that appeal. But I would also like to draw the Council's attention to a very different side of the Central African Republic. Against the odds, many people, including women from all walks of life, are organizing to survive and prosper. Young people asked us to support and lead them in rehabilitating their peers who had been affected by violence or who had also participated in violent acts. Women leaders separated by religious and social divides are clear in their resolve to bridge their differences and build a better future for their country. They are organized and full of plans, ideas and courage. They are particularly asking for support in order to engage in women's economic activity, for psychosocial assistance and for help in restoring their country's educational system.

I urge members of the Security Council to support the women of the Central African Republic and to implement the gender-equality recommendations made by the United Nations electoral needs assessment mission. The success of reconciliation initiatives, the upcoming elections and national recovery depends on women's leadership and participation. Priority should be given to special temporary measures and quotas for women's representation, as well as protection and security from MINUSCA for women's participation in the elections.

Stronger action must be taken to protect civilians and restore State authority and the rule of law. As the Council knows, most courts and prisons have ceased to function, and many civil servants and magistrates have abandoned their positions. UN-Women is taking part in a joint programme that will improve women's access to justice. It will focus on survivors of sexual and gender-based violence and on building the capacity of national institutions, while also deploying mobile courts and holding perpetrators accountable. We note the efforts of the International Commission of Inquiry and the President's recent request to the International Criminal Court. Efforts to secure justice at all levels must be supported, and UN-Women has offered to provide dedicated gender-crime investigators.

We also welcome the Council's recent decision to establish a robust peacekeeping mission in MINUSCA, building on the efforts of the Economic Community of Central African States and the African Union, and on the support offered by the French forces and the European Union mission. This year's initial deployment of gender and women's protection advisers must be strengthened next year. That expertise must expand beyond Bangui to the regions and be embedded in all of the Mission's priority areas. To build durable national security, we need more women in the Mission's military, police and civilian components.

I am pleased to announce that, for the first time, UN-Women and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations will offer specialized predeployment training on preventing sexual violence. I urge all troop-contributing countries to take up the offer and support the full implementation of this training in their countries. I also urge the international community and members of the Security Council to increase funding for the safety and protection of women and girls, for women's economic empowerment and for education. We know that women's employment, entrepreneurship and child care all have a significant impact on family and community recovery and can be a powerful investment for peacebuilding.

UN-Women will work with partners, including the AU, to ensure that emergency employment programmes include women as at least 40 per cent of their beneficiaries. We encourage all international partners to adhere to the United Nations policy on earmarking 15 per cent or more of funding for women's empowerment and gender equality.

UN-Women is also partnering with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to respond to the urgent needs of women and girls in refugee sites in Cameroon and to support women's access to humanitarian aid in the Central African Republic.

To reiterate, I request the Council to ensure that MINUSCA has the proper gender architecture to fulfil its mission, that troop-contributing countries

provide all troops access to training on the prevention of sexual violence, that women be represented in all processes that deal with peacemaking, peacebuilding and reconciliation, that election preparations place women's representation and participation at their centre, that efforts to rebuild the justice system and secure accountability for grave crimes include dedicated sexual and gender crimes experts and that our humanitarian response be scaled up, both within and outside the country, and that education and economic well-being are addressed.

The women we met in the Central African Republic, including interim President Samba-Panza, must be supported to play their full and equal role as agents of change, peace and security. Empowered women are the best drivers of growth, the best hope for reconciliation and the best buffer against the radicalization of youth and the repetition of cycles of violence. Their voices must be heard.

In going about my work, I have been touched by the level of awareness among women around the world of the Security Council's decisions on women and peace and security. This body has made very significant promises to women, most recently in resolution 2122 (2013) and resolution 2149 (2014), on the Central African Republic, and has included strong language on women's participation, leadership and protection. UN-Women stands ready to support the Council to implement those strong commitments and to keep its promises.

Once again, Sir, I thank you for this opportunity, and I look forward to our discussion.

**The President** (*spoke in Russian*): I thank Ms. Mlambo-Ngcuka for her briefing.

I now give the floor to the representative of the Central African Republic.

**Ms. Maliavo-Samba** (Central African Republic) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, on behalf of Mrs. Catherine Samba-Panza, President of the Republic and Head of the Transitional State, and His Excellency Mr. André Nzapayeke, Prime Minister and Head of the Transitional Government, I would like to express my country's thanks for the ongoing attention the Council has given to the crisis currently rocking our country. I would also like to thank the Executive Director of UN-Women for everything that her organization has done for our country. She has described the situation of women during the crisis in the Central African Republic.

To respond to the crisis, our country must face several challenges. There are the security crisis, which must be addressed in order to guarantee the rights of everyone living in our country, including women, who are the main victims of the crisis. With respect to the security challenge, today, as we know, the Central African Republic does not have a national army to guarantee security and the rights of individuals. The Central African Republic is under embargo, which is why we cannot fully shoulder our sovereign duties.

There is also the legal challenge. Today, the judicial system in the Central African Republic is sick. The police force needs to be rehabilitated. Judges must also take up their work. But none of that can happen unless there is security. Judges cannot return to their posts in the back country due to security issues. Criminals thus have free rein to commit harmful acts.

There is are also the challenge of governance. The rebuilding of public State institutions is crucial, but today, again because of security issues, the prefects who represent the Government in the back country cannot return to their posts. Therefore, the State is for all practical purposes confined to the capital: the State basically does not exist in the back country.

I would therefore very humbly ask for the Security Council's support so that all of the compassion that has been expressed for the Central African Republic can truly be translated into deeds. It is time for us to take action to save all of the lives that are being lost with every day, minute and second that pass.

I would also like to note that the current crisis in the Central African Republic is not a sectarian crisis, as has been widely broadcast. It began as an inter-communal problem, and the sectarian aspect came about as a result of political manipulation and — we must underscore this here today — the negative influence of certain media outlets, at both the national and international levels.

I would like to express my satisfaction regarding the mission to the Central African Republic led by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. Today, in Geneva, the independent expert, Ms. Keita Bocoum, presented her report on human rights in the Central African Republic to me. She will of course also present it to the Security Council here in New York.

Another mission also took place — that of the Commission of Inquiry, also in Bangui. It will also present its report to the Council shortly.

Given the limited means at the disposal of the Central African Republic today, it is important for the Government to receive support in order for it to be able to bring to justice the criminals who continue to practice sexism, rape and kill; for that to come to an end in our country and for the entire population to have its dignity restored. Therefore, on behalf of my country, I call for action — and, I would emphasize, swift, effective action — to be taken. The Executive Director of UN-Women stated that only one third of the funds necessary to meet humanitarian needs are currently being provided. It is important that everyone suffering in camps for internally displaced persons or as refugees in neighbouring countries be taken into account in the various efforts that will be undertaken. What is at stake at the regional level as a result of the Central African crisis is significant. It is also urgent for the humanitarian aid that is to be provided to the Central African Republic to also be provided to Central Africans who are in neighbouring countries and who are living in very difficult circumstances.

Those are, Sir, the few points that I wanted to submit to the Council for its consideration.

**The President** (*spoke in Russian*): There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers. I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion of the subject.

*The meeting rose at 3.40 p.m.*